

July 10, 2004

Chairman Michael K. Powell  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to add my voice to the growing number of groups and individuals opposed to efforts by the local Bell telephone companies to circumvent current rules on calls placed with a pre-paid calling card. If they succeed, it will result in higher rates – in many cases, dramatically higher rates – for consumers who place the calls. As you approach your work on this docket, I implore you to keep the needs of consumers in mind rather than the pleadings of the four Bell companies.

The Bell companies want to target those calls in which a caller uses a pre-paid calling card and dials a toll-free number, along with his or her PIN. The caller, who may be in Virginia, for example, is connected to a "platform" in another state – let's say in Nebraska. From this "platform," he or she hears a message about a company, non-profit or person. The caller then dials the telephone number of someone in Virginia. Current rules, as well as common sense, state that this represents two calls, one from Virginia to Nebraska and one from Nebraska to Virginia. Both calls are subject to interstate access charges because there is a call to Nebraska and then a separate call to Virginia.

But the Bell companies want to treat this as a single in-state call so they can levy exorbitant in-state access charges. Such fees have no relationship whatsoever to the Bell companies' actual costs, which are only a fraction of what they want to charge consumers.

Prices are already rising for gas, milk and other products. Consumers don't need higher prices for phone calls too, especially when these higher rates represent a blatant giveaway to four large corporations.

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Sincerely,

*Robert Wiggins*  
*New York*

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin  
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein  
Senator  
Senator

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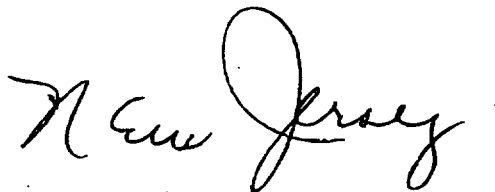
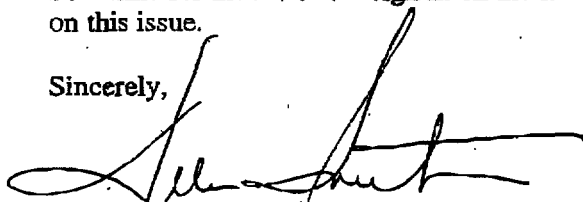
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*Edward J. Jans* Phila Pa

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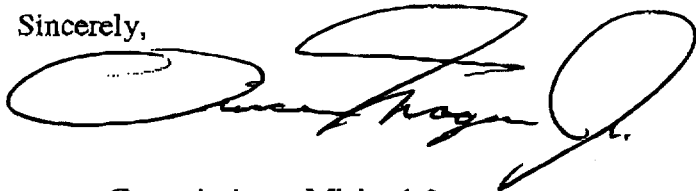
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Please stop any effort to raise the costs of pre-paid calling card consumers by deciding that these services are not subject to exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

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Commissioner Kevin Martin  
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Sincerely,

*Donna Carter*  
*Phila PA 19144*

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
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Military personnel stationed in the U.S. and all over the world rely heavily upon low-cost telecommunications services to keep in touch with family and friends back home. But pending before the FCC is a proposal that would introduce new charges and fees on these cards that we depend upon to stay connected, immediately harming the tens of thousands of American service men and women stationed worldwide.

I understand that the FCC is considering applying "in-state" access charges and other fees on certain prepaid calling card services. American service personnel, particularly those who move frequently, rely upon these prepaid calling cards to keep in touch with their families at set, affordable rates.

As a result, prepaid calling cards are the only option available – without them, military personnel could, quite literally, be left without access to telephone service. Raising the price of prepaid calling cards will directly harm individuals who are most in need of vital phone service to keep their loved ones within reach.

Imposing in-state charges would amount to a substantial increase in the cost of prepaid calls, destroying the utility of calling cards for our service men and women. Please look out for our military personnel and refuse to impose new access charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Sincerely, *Karen Woods, Tennessee*

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps  
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In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable for these and other consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden of the cost is passed on to the business that can least afford to bear it. Adding access charges and fees will substantially increase the cost of providing pre-paid cards at affordable prices, jeopardizing the savings provided by these cards.

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Sincerely,

*Hancina Norris*

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*Monique Turner*  
Phila, PA

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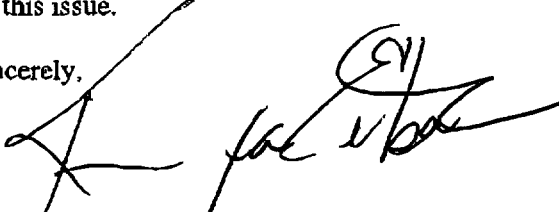
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*LeAnna Hightower*  
*Phila, PA,*

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*Quana Willis*  
PHILA, PA.

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RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

Military personnel stationed in the U.S. and all over the world rely heavily upon low-cost telecommunications services to keep in touch with family and friends back home. But pending before the FCC is a proposal that would introduce new charges and fees on these cards that we depend upon to stay connected, immediately harming the tens of thousands of American service men and women stationed worldwide.

I understand that the FCC is considering applying "in-state" access charges and other fees on certain prepaid calling card services. American service personnel, particularly those who move frequently, rely upon these prepaid calling cards to keep in touch with their families at set, affordable rates.

As a result, prepaid calling cards are the only option available – without them, military personnel could, quite literally, be left without access to telephone service. Raising the price of prepaid calling cards will directly harm individuals who are most in need of vital phone service to keep their loved ones within reach.

Imposing in-state charges would amount to a substantial increase in the cost of prepaid calls, destroying the utility of calling cards for our service men and women. Please look out for our military personnel and refuse to impose new access charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Sincerely,

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy  
Commissioner Kevin Martin  
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein  
Senator  
Senator

Debra Price  
Sharon Hill  
PA

July 10, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell  
Federal Communications Commission  
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Senator  
Senator

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7/13/04  
PA

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445 12th Street, S.W.  
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RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to ask that the FCC not impose new hidden charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Minorities, lower-income families, senior citizens, immigrants, college students and military families rely upon calling card services for a variety of needs. Many of these consumers do not have the credit, bank accounts, or surplus cash to pay a large deposit for local telephone service. For these consumers, a prepaid card may be the only option they have to stay connected – to make phone calls to look for a job, for affordable housing, make a doctor's appointment, or stay in touch with family and friends. These cards offer convenience and predictable costs.

In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable for these and other consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

~~But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it. Adding access charges and fees will substantially increase the cost of providing pre-paid cards at affordable prices, jeopardizing the savings provided by these cards.~~

Please stop any effort to raise the costs of pre-paid calling card consumers by deciding that these services are not subject to exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,

Carol Robinson

Mississippi

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy  
Commissioner Kevin Martin  
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein  
Senator  
Senator

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Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to add my voice to the growing number of groups and individuals opposed to efforts by the local Bell telephone companies to circumvent current rules on calls placed with a pre-paid calling card. If they succeed, it will result in higher rates – in many cases, dramatically higher rates – for consumers who place the calls. As you approach your work on this docket, I implore you to keep the needs of consumers in mind rather than the pleadings of the four Bell companies.

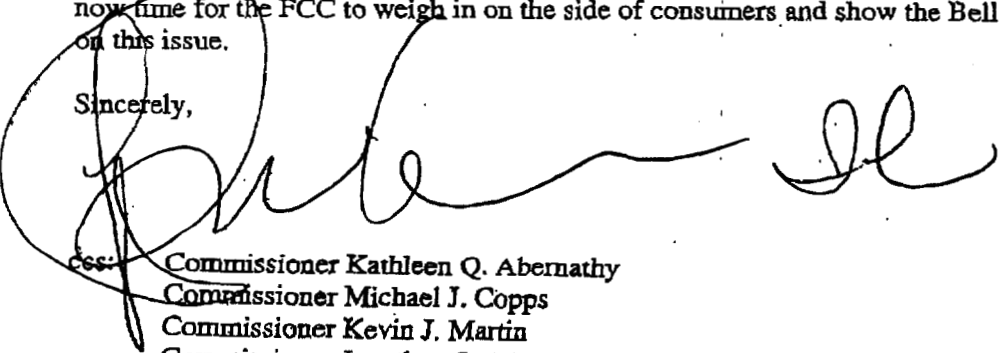
The Bell companies want to target those calls in which a caller uses a pre-paid calling card and dials a toll-free number, along with his or her PIN. The caller, who may be in Virginia, for example, is connected to a "platform" in another state – let's say in Nebraska. From this "platform," he or she hears a message about a company, non-profit or person. The caller then dials the telephone number of someone in Virginia. Current rules, as well as common sense, state that this represents two calls, one from Virginia to Nebraska and one from Nebraska to Virginia. Both calls are subject to interstate access charges because there is a call to Nebraska and then a separate call to Virginia.

But the Bell companies want to treat this as a single in-state call so they can levy exorbitant in-state access charges. Such fees have no relationship whatsoever to the Bell companies' actual costs, which are only a fraction of what they want to charge consumers.

Prices are already rising for gas, milk and other products. Consumers don't need higher prices for phone calls too, especially when these higher rates represent a blatant giveaway to four large corporations.

I am aware that the long distance companies and others that sell pre-paid calling cards have weighed in with the FCC in an effort to protect their customers' interests in this manner. It is now time for the FCC to weigh in on the side of consumers and show the Bell companies the door on this issue.

Sincerely,



cc: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin  
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein  
Senator  
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*Lola Thompson*  
*Pa.*

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Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin  
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein  
Senator  
Senator

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Sincerely,

*Joyce Clark*      *AK/OR/WT 1001*

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin  
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein  
Senator  
Senator

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Raymonde Best  
Pennsylvania

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
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